

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon, comprising:

mixing a carbonaceous material and an alkali metal hydroxide while maintaining a solid state to obtain a mixture;

granulating the mixture while maintaining a solid state to obtain a granulated product;

dehydrating the granulated product while maintaining a solid state to obtain a dehydrated product; and

subjecting the dehydrated product to an activation treatment to obtain the activated carbon.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature in said granulating is 80°C or more.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the pressure in said granulating is 0.01 to 300 Torr, and the temperature in said granulating is 90 to 140°C.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the maximum diameter of the granulated product is 50 mm or less.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature in said dehydrating is 200°C or more.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the pressure in said dehydrating is 0.01 to 10 Torr, and the temperature in said dehydrating is 200 to 400°C.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein during said dehydrating, the pressure (~~Torr~~) and the temperature rise rate (~~°C/minute~~) are set so as to satisfy the following equation (2),

$$Pv < 15 \text{ Torr} \cdot \text{°C/minute} \quad (2)$$

wherein P is the pressure (Torr), and v is the temperature rise rate (°C/minute).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the carbonaceous material is an easily graphitizable carbonaceous material.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the carbonaceous material is a mesophase pitch carbon fiber.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 9, wherein the mesophase pitch carbon fiber comprises 50 vol% or more of an optically anisotropic phase.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the carbonaceous material comprises grains with a maximum length of 500 μm or less in the direction of the major axis.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide has an average particle diameter of 1 mm or less.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide and/or potassium hydroxide.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein no less than 1 part by weight of alkali metal hydroxide is mixed with 1 part by weight of carbonaceous material in said mixing.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature in said activation treatment is 500°C to 900°C.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the rate at which the temperature is raised to 200 to 600°C is 5°C/minute or less, and the holding time at a holding temperature of 700°C or more is 0.5 to 8 hours in the activation treatment.

Claim 17 (Original): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, wherein the rate at which the temperature is raised to 200 to 600°C is 2°C/minute or less.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, wherein the holding time at a holding temperature of 700°C or more is 1 to 6 hours.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, wherein the holding temperature is 700 to 850°C.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 16, wherein the activation treatment is performed in a rotary kiln.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 20, wherein the activation treatment is a continuous process.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the alkali metal in vapor form that is generated during activation treatment is sorbed to the activated carbon for sorption by circulating inert gas through the system in at least the activation treatment and contacting the circulating inert gas for 0.5 seconds or more with the activated carbon for sorption wherein the activated carbon has been heated to a temperature of 300 to 800°C.

Claim 23 (Original): The manufacturing method according to claim 22, wherein the circulating inert gas has a linear velocity of 1.0 to 10.0 mm/second.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein said granulating and said dehydrating are performed so as to satisfy the following equation (3),

$$[A1/B1] \geq [A2/B2] \quad (3)$$

wherein A1 (N) is the crushing strength of the granulated product, B1 (cm) is the diameter of the granulated product, A2 (N) is the crushing strength of the dehydrated product, and B2 (cm) is the diameter of the dehydrated product.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, further comprising adding a finely pulverized carbonaceous material to the alkali metal hydroxide prior to said mixing in an amount of 0.5 to 10 wt %.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 25, wherein variation in the composition ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide relative to the carbonaceous material in the granulated and/or dehydrated product is 5% or less.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 26, wherein variation in the composition ratio of the alkali metal hydroxide relative to the carbonaceous material is 2% or less.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): A dehydration product for an activated carbon obtained by the process comprising

mixing a carbonaceous material and an alkali metal hydroxide while maintaining a solid state to obtain a mixture,

granulating the mixture while maintaining its solid state to obtain a granulated substance, and

dehydrating the granulated substance while maintaining a solid state to obtain the dehydrated product;

wherein said dehydrated product satisfies the following equation (1),

$$[M1/C1]/[M2/C2] \leq 2.4 \quad (1)$$

where $[M1/C1]$ is the alkali metal/carbon ratio in the surface layer region thereof, and $[M2/C2]$ is the alkali metal/carbon ratio in the center portion thereof.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The activated carbon obtained according to the manufacturing method as claimed in claim 1.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): An activated carbon obtained by the process comprising
activating carbonaceous material with an alkali metal hydroxide,
wherein the standard deviations of the relative peak strengths of the graphite D band, the amorphous G band, and the graphite G band in relation to the peak strength of the amorphous D band are 0.05 or less, wherein the peak strength of the amorphous D band in the Raman spectrum is set to 1 when 20 observation points or more are measured.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): A polarizable electrode obtained by mixing and molding
the activated carbon according to claim 29,
a binder and
a conductive filler.

Claim 32 (Original): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, wherein the metal content is 300 ppm or less.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, wherein the polarizable electrode optionally comprises iron, copper and/or nickel and the iron, copper, and nickel contents are each 20 ppm or less.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The polarizable electrode according to claim 31, wherein the electrode density of the polarizable electrode is 0.80 g/cc or more.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): An electric double-layer capacitor comprising the polarizable electrode as claimed in claim 31.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The electric double-layer capacitor according to claim 35, wherein the electrostatic capacity is 30 F/cc or more.

Claim 37 (Previously Presented): The electric double-layer capacitor according to claim 35, wherein the retention rate of the electrostatic capacity is maintained at 90% or more after repeating charging and discharging 500 times, the charging and discharging consisting of charging with a constant current and discharging with a constant current.

Claim 38 (Previously Presented): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon by subjecting a carbonaceous material to an activating treatment with the aid of an alkali metal-comprising activator, said method comprising

preparing a mixture comprising the carbonaceous material and the alkali metal-comprising activator,

heat treating the mixture,

pressure molding the mixture to obtain a molded product, and

performing the heating process of the activating treatment to the molded product.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented): A method for manufacturing an activated carbon by subjecting a carbonaceous material to an activating treatment with the aid of an alkali metal-comprising activator, said method comprising

preparing a mixture comprising the carbonaceous material and the alkali metal-comprising activator,

hot-pressing the mixture at 2 MPa or more and less than 40 MPa to obtain a molded product

performing the heating process of the activating treatment to the molded product.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the weight ratio $[W_2/W_1]$ is set to 2.5 or less, where the weight of the carbonaceous material is W_1 , and the weight of the alkali metal activator is W_2 .

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the alkali metal-comprising activator is an alkali metal hydroxide.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is potassium hydroxide.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the heating temperature of the mixture in the heating said hot-pressing is set to 300°C or less.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the pressure applied to the mixture in said pressure molding is 5 MPa or more.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the pressure applied in said hot-pressing is 2 MPa or more.

Claim 46 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the specific surface area of the activated carbon is 1,000 m²/g or less.

Claim 47 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 38, wherein the activated carbon optionally comprises nickel and the nickel content in the activated carbon is 20 ppm or less.

Claim 48 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the weight ratio $[W_2/W_1]$ is set to 2.5 or less, where the weight of the carbonaceous material is W_1 , and the weight of the alkali metal activator is W_2 .

Claim 49 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the alkali metal-comprising activator is an alkali metal hydroxide.

Claim 50 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the alkali metal hydroxide is potassium hydroxide.

Claim 51 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the specific surface area of the activated carbon is $1,000 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ or less.

Claim 52 (Previously Presented): The method of manufacturing an activated carbon according to claim 39, wherein the activated carbon optionally comprises nickel and the nickel content in the activated carbon is 20 ppm or less.